


Text-to-Text

Compare and Contrast 		
Title		
Subtitle		
Photograph		
Boldfaced Words		
Italics		
First Paragraph Last Paragraph		
Diagram		
Focus Questions		
Glossary/Key Words		

SUPPORT AND MONITOR COMPREHENSION

Compare/Contrast: Discovering Patterns



How Does Compare/Contrast Support Content Literacy?

Compare/contrast writing is one of the five major patterns of expository writing most often found in content texts. Other common patterns of writing are chronology, listing, cause/effect, and problem/solution (Horowitz 1985). In content reading, it is critical that students develop the ability to hold multiple texts in their heads in order to analyze and synthesize the volume of information presented in these texts. One effective way for students to learn this strategy is through guided practice in comparing and contrasting events, historical figures, works of literature, speeches, political positions, scientific phenomena, and mathematical principles.

What Structures Support the Teaching of Compare/Contrast?

Any graphic organizer that helps students gather data, organize and categorize information, and create points of comparison between two or more events/texts/personalities could serve as an instructional tool for guiding students in organizing their thinking and learning. Graphic organizers help students learn concepts because they enable students to order attributes of the concepts in a pattern that makes the information memorable.

In the Classroom

The Text-to-Text graphic organizer in this Figure was used by an eighth-grade health teacher to help her students organize the information they had learned about salmonella from reading two different texts: a newspaper article titled "Reptiles, Children Don't Mix" and a section of *Oh, Yuck! The Encyclopedia of Everything Nasty*. In this sample, students are comparing several aspects of their reading about salmonella: ways to contract the disease, ways for prevention, language associated with salmonella, what salmonella is, where to get information, and quotes to remember to support the information.

By using an organizer such as the one shown in the Figure, students are able to integrate and synthesize a large amount of information on a single topic. Applying this organizer to academic writing, students have possible thesis statements, topics for body paragraphs, content language, quotes, and points of comparison or reference. As with all graphic organizers, the ultimate goal is that students will internalize the organizing features embedded in the graphic

Research/Origins

- Ausubel, D. 1968. *Educational Psychology: A Cognitive View*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Horowitz, R. 1985. "Text Patterns." *Journal of Reading* 28: 448-454.
- McTighe, J., and F. Lyman, Jr. 1988. "Cueing Thinking in the Classroom: The Promise of Theory-Embedded Tools." *Educational Leadership* 45: 18-24.

References/Further Reading

- Buehl, D. 2001. *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*. 2d ed. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Masoff, J. 2000. *Oh, Yuck! The Encyclopedia of Everything Nasty*. New York: Workman.
- Okie, S. 1999. "Reptiles, Children Don't Mix." *Washington Post*, November 16, p. Z12.

Text-to-Text		
Compare and Contrast "Reptiles, Children Don't Mix" ↔ "Oh, Yuck!"		
Ways to get Salmonella	handling animals objects contaminated with feces	undercooked meat uncooked eggs
how salmonella can be prevented	Don't have reptiles at home Keep reptiles out of food areas Don't let them roam around house	Don't eat batter with uncooked eggs. Cook meat thoroughly-wash
Academic words connected to Salmonella	immune system contaminated transmission infections disinfected symptoms	bacteria fungi digest intestines
What salmonella is	infection	infection
Where to get additional information	CDC	Research bacteria + types of bacteria Health books
Quotes to note about Salmonella	"reptiles account for 93,000 cases of infection each year"	"chicken guts are crawling with salmonella bacteria"